

Shellfish & Sea Urchins Regulations Table

Species	Closed Season	Possession Limit	Min. Size
Bay Scallops	4/1 - 10/1	10 Bu/day including Annual shells *	Well-defined growth line
Knobbed & Channeled Whelk^	12/15-4/14 for conch pot fishermen	1,000 lb mixed limit for draggers (CAP Holders)	Legal size determined through use of 2 7/8" chute gauge and any orientation method of measurement.
Surf Clams**&	--	200 Bu/Day or 400 Bu/48 hr	5" (wild), 1.5" (aquaculture reared)
Oysters&	--	--	3" (wild), 2.5" (aquaculture reared)
Soft-shell Clams*	--	--	2"
Sea Scallops ***	--	200 meat lbs or 2,000 lbs shell-on	3.5" height
Quahogs&	--	40 Bu/Day	1" thickness (wild), 7/8" thickness(aquaculture reared and must be distributed out-of-state after primary sale to MA Wholesale Dealer)
Sea Urchins	Scuba: 5/1 - 8/31 Mobile Gear: 3/1 - 10/31	--	2" exclude spines

^ All chute gauges must be made of rigid material and measure at least 6" length by 2 7/8" internal width by 1 1/2" wall height. The chute gauge may not be modified in any manner that may affect measuring whelks; this does not include fastening the chute to a gunwale or culling table. Using the chute gauge, whelks are to be measured operculum facing down and as flat as possible on the bottom of the gauge and the siphonal canal in any orientation to the side walls of the gauge. Any whelks that fit through the chute gauge in this orientation are considered sub-legal and must be immediately returned to the sea. When measuring whelks with this method the animals may not be manipulated in any manner that may affect proper gauging. Dealers may possess sub-legal sized whelks provided the whelks were imported from a state with a different minimum size. All containers of whelks must bear a shellfish tag and if sub-legal sized whelks are present that shellfish tag must demonstrate the whelks were harvested in another state.

* subject to modification by Town Regulations

** Federal surf clam permit holders may possess and land sub-legal surf clams provided surf clams were caught in federal waters and gear is stowed when transiting state-waters. Surf clam dealers may also possess sub-legal sized surf clams provided the surf clams were lawfully landed by federal permit holders or were imported from a state with different minimum size. All containers of surf clams must retain their original shellfish harvester tags and the origin of all containers of surf clams must be determinable through a federal trip report or bill of lading.

*** pursuant to the authority found in 322 CMR 7.01(7), see permit conditions issued to Coastal Access Permit holders

& The minimum sizes for surf clams, quahogs and oysters differ if they are aquaculture raised. Aquaculture raised surf clams may be harvested and sold at a 1 1/2" minimum size and aquaculture raised oysters may be harvested and sold at a 2 1/2" minimum size. Aquaculture raised quahogs may be harvested at a 7/8" minimum size and sold to a Massachusetts primary buyer, however, all subsequent sales must be to entities outside the Commonwealth. All containers with non-conforming aquaculture raised shellfish must have the words "Aquaculture Reared" or "Farm Raised" on the shellfish tag.

Minimum size measured by longest diameter. These sizes are subject to change, contact the Division for further information.

The taking of shellfish, eels and seaworms are subject to the control of the cities and towns. Consult local authorities for regulations and permits. However, the Division of Marine Fisheries has authority to regulate surf clams, ocean quahogs & shellfish taken from certain contaminated areas.

Sale of shellfish: To sell shellfish, an individual must possess a town/city commercial shellfish permit, a state commercial fisherman permit endorsed for shellfish, and a shellfish ID card issued by the Division of Marine Fisheries. Sales of shellfish may only be made to licensed wholesale dealers authorized to purchase shellfish.